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**GEOGRAPHY AS AN AID TO STATECRAFT**  
**AN APPRECIATION OF MACKINDER'S "DEMOCRATIC IDEALS**  
**AND REALITY"\***

**By FREDERICK J. TEGGART**

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New ideas are never wholly welcome guests. We are all creatures of habit and shirk the discomfort of entertaining strangers whose language we do not quite understand. Ordinarily we prefer the modes of thought in which we have been brought up. Only in times of trouble and upheaval, when the familiar routine of our lives is broken into, are we really open to new suggestions. But at such times we become alarmed and clamor nervously for the prompt application of practical expedients. In emergencies men are impatient to act, "to do something," without undue consideration. In such circumstances men think new methods are likely to prove a waste of time. Yet this is just one of the great lessons of the war. To overcome difficulties, and to succeed, it is necessary to be on the alert for new ways of doing things; and it is necessary to try these new ways, even in face of a nearly victorious enemy.

**NEED OF SCIENTIFIC METHOD IN THE STUDY OF HUMAN AFFAIRS**

Mr. Mackinder, ex-director of the London School of Economics and Member of Parliament, proposes a new method for approaching political questions, and his views demand serious attention. Today, he says, all society is clay in our hands. We are trying to remold this clay with the aim of producing a new and more equitable ordering of the affairs of men. But, he insists, the vision of a beautiful object—whether a Grecian urn or a league of nations—is not all that the clay-molder requires. He must have technical knowledge. Today we know how to manufacture munitions; we do not know how to assist Russia in setting up a stable régime. We know how to build airplanes and submarines; we do not know how to meet the demands of labor and capital. In the present situation expedients will no longer serve our needs. We cannot restore the conditions that existed before the war. We cannot accept all the proposals that are being put forward. Yet we must go on. The clay must be reshaped. To do this, without inviting disaster, we must have knowledge; and we must acquire this knowledge, not in academic seclusion, but as we go.

What we need, and need urgently, is the application of scientific method to the problems of human relations. Mr. Mackinder is emphatic in saying

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\* H. J. Mackinder: *Democratic Ideals and Reality: A Study in the Politics of Reconstruction*, Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1919.

that we cannot hope to safeguard our democratic ideals without a grasp of the realities of geography and economics. He himself, in this book, attempts to put science to work in the field of politics; he seeks to yoke learning to the plow of public service. It is true that he is not alone in this desire to have our political experimentation conducted in accordance with scientific principles. He stands out, however, as one who has the courage to enlist erudition as a guide to action.

This is not the first time that men have endeavored to approach human problems in a scientific spirit. We have, of course, forgotten the effect of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars on Mr. Mackinder's predecessors. We have, for example, forgotten that it was the aim of Malthus "to investigate the causes that have hitherto impeded the progress of mankind towards happiness; and to examine the probability of the total or partial removal of these causes in future." Malthus was far from being a voice crying in the wilderness; he was a participant in a movement, unhappily premature, to apply the comparative method to the investigation of social difficulties. So, too, the realization of the unity of the Eurasian continent, which Mr. Mackinder considers a revolution in the thought of our time, is not new. Even his remarkable presentation is no finer demonstration of this unity than the "*Tableaux historiques de l'Asie*" which Julius Klaproth published in 1826.

It is essential that we should recall instances like these in order to realize the precariousness of intellectual advance. The eighteenth century initiated scientific inquiry into the phenomena of human activity. Had this aim been fostered we should not be groping in the darkness of today. As it turned out, the efforts of Englishmen and Frenchmen to reach a new basis of inquiry were set aside in favor of a return to conventionalized scholarship under Prussian leadership.

The new movement which Mr. Mackinder represents cannot achieve its aim without definite and purposive support. This support, to be continuous, must be developed through the instrumentality of the university. But in what immediate connection can this be effected?

#### FAILURE OF HISTORY TO MEET THIS NEED

One might think that history would have taken the lead in the application of scientific method to humanistic study. The comparative method lends itself effectively to the study of institutions; and one would expect a world outlook in the study fathered by Herodotus. History, however, has not embraced the opportunity. For this failure there are obvious reasons. In the first place, humanistic study has never progressed far beyond the Renaissance activity (on a par with that of the Alexandrian librarians) of editing texts for publication, and history, in the nineteenth century, surrendered unconditionally to this tradition. Then again the outlook of the historian is narrowed by the materials with which he works, and his

vision is restricted to the contents of documents written in languages he can understand. As a result the study of history has persistently maintained a Europocentric standpoint. It is only within a few years that the extension of "ancient history" to include Egypt and Mesopotamia has been accepted in university teaching, and, as yet, Farther Asia is wholly ignored. The study of history is carried on in narrow compartments of periods and countries. This rigid procedure renders impossible the comparison of human experience under different conditions, and without comparison scientific results cannot be attained.

#### OPPORTUNITY OF GEOGRAPHY

History being thus tied down by its traditions, we are forced to look elsewhere for a foundation on which to base a scientific study of man. Fortunately geography is available, and it has striking advantages for the purpose. It is unhampered by limiting traditions. It has not hitherto been taught in the university and is therefore open to free development in response to needs. It has the great advantage of close affiliation with the developed science of geology and may be said to be on good terms with anthropology, archeology, and economics. By the force of its materials, it is committed to a world outlook. The historian having put aside the leadership of Herodotus to follow the precedent of Thucydides, it is now possible for the geographer to return to the older and wider vision. Mr. Mackinder has taken the initiative in showing how a knowledge of geography may be utilized in dealing with the practical problems of political life.

#### TO MAKE THE WORLD SAFE—

We propose to make the world safe for democracy—but how is this to be done? Not by setting up a league of nations based upon juridical conceptions and diplomatic compromises. International law failed wholly to avert the war. Law comes into play when wrongs have been committed; but it is helpless without the backing of force. It prescribes limitations; but an uncounted number of law-making and law-administering bodies is required to keep up with men's ingenuity in finding loopholes of escape. "In our great replanning of human society we must recognize that the skill and opportunity of the robber are prior facts to the law of robbery." So we must take up our problems today as men dealing with realities of growth and opportunity, not merely as lawyers defining rights and remedies.

Democracies are inspired by ideas, not ruled by force. At great moments men become conscious of vast ideals: ideals of liberty in 1789; of nationality in 1848; of world unity in 1917. Is tragedy also to follow in the wake of this latest vision? Is the disappointed idealist again to fall into the hands of a Napoleon or a Bismarck? The nemesis of democratic

idealism is the rule of the organizer. Democracy aspires to enable every individual to live a full and self-respecting life; the organizer disciplines men in the interest of efficiency. The democrat thinks in terms of principles, the organizer plans constructions. He opposes strategy to ethics. The democrat, being uncertain how to proceed, experiments; the organizer, having a "ways and means" mind, seizes the moment of uncertainty, and turns it to account. For success, the organizer needs only a plan, but the democrat requires knowledge which is not yet available.

#### MR. MACKINDER'S PROPOSAL

Mr. Mackinder sets about getting this knowledge by asking the pertinent question: How is the world to be made safe for democracy? As a result of his investigations he makes specific recommendations. To create the conditions precedent to an effective league of nations, he says, we must see to it that Eastern Europe is divided into self-contained nations. It is a vital necessity, he holds, that there should be a tier of independent states between Germany and Russia. Practically, he thinks, the realization of our hopes for the future turns upon the restoration of Poland and Bohemia to a complete national existence. In point of fact, the states indicated have been authorized by the Peace Conference and are now in some sort of being. We may, therefore, pass over his recommendations for action to examine the considerations upon which these proposals are based.

#### THE MENACE IN GERMAN CONTROL OF RUSSIA

Briefly, Mr. Mackinder believes that these independent states are necessary because the greatest menace to democracy lies in the possibility of German control of the Russian territories. The Russian Empire occupies a strategical position which it is Mr. Mackinder's aim to point out. This he states in a formula which, at first sight, appears more or less cryptic: "Who rules East Europe," he says, "commands the Heartland. Who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island. Who rules the World-Island commands the World." Obviously this statement calls for explanation.

#### THE "WORLD-ISLAND"

In Mr. Mackinder's view "the joint continent of Europe, Asia, and Africa is effectively, and not merely theoretically, an island"—the World-Island (Fig. 1). The entire argument of the book, however, represents the area in a quite different light. The "Old World" land mass is an island only in theory, for the Polar ice, grounded on its northern shore, makes circumnavigation impracticable, if not impossible. The continent is the World-Promontory, stretching southward from a vague, inaccessible, and

uninhabited north. It is strategically the ultimate peninsula, free from the menace of attack from a wider land behind.

Island, continent, or promontory, this area is, and must ever remain, of controlling importance in the affairs of men. True, it occupies only one-sixth of the surface of the globe, but it holds (with its adjacent islands)

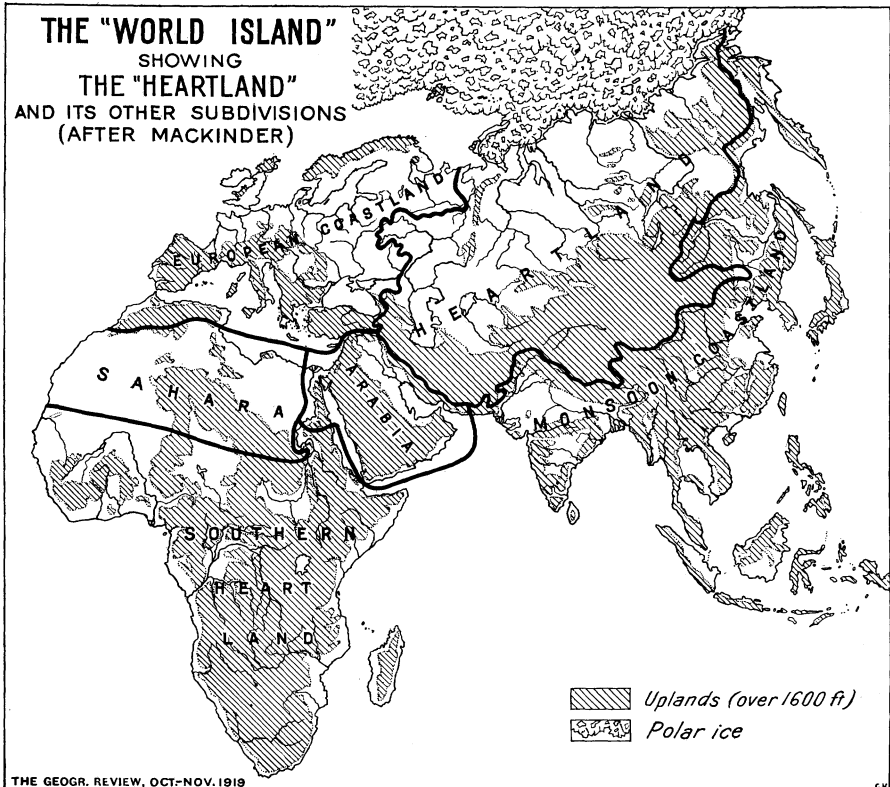


FIG. 1—The "World-Island" showing the "Heartland" and its subdivisions (adapted from Mackinder, Figs. 15 and 16). Scale, 1:150,000,000. The World-Island is an island only in theory, for the Polar ice makes its northern shores inaccessible and, from the standpoint of human development, turns it into a "World-Promontory."

fifteen-sixteenths of the world's population. No development of other lands in the future is likely, Mr. Mackinder thinks, to affect materially this proportion. Within the continent, again, four-fifths of the inhabitants live in two regions (the European Coast Land and the Monsoon Coast Land, or "Indies") which together measure only one-fifth of its area.

#### UNEVEN DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION

The uneven distribution of population thus indicated suggests an intricate problem which Vidal de la Blache was considering in the *Annales de Géographie* (1917-1918) at the time of his death. Mr. Mackinder, however,

only goes so far as to point out that the populous "coast lands" of the East and West resemble each other in having numerous rivers navigable continuously from the ocean and in having a widespread rainfall on the plains as well as on the mountains. They are fertile and accessible from the ocean, in contrast with other lands which are sparsely populated, scantily supplied with rain, and inaccessible by water.

Of these other regions the most obvious is the Sahara, stretching from the Atlantic to the Nile Valley. It forms an unbroken boundary between the white and the black man. East of the Sahara lies Arabia, extending, as re-defined here, from the Nile to beyond the Euphrates, and from the Taurus to the Gulf of Aden (see Fig. 1). As a land it is half desert, half dry steppes. At this point one cannot but feel that the author has been tempted to oversimplify the facts in the desire to delimit the continent into a few major areas. Certainly the "Fertile Crescent" of the Near East cannot be accepted offhand as an integral part of Arabia. It has played its highly significant rôle in history, not as an arid region, but as one eminently productive and populous. The more effective way of regarding this remarkable strip is not as an oasis in the desert, but (in the manner of Hogarth, Breasted, and J. L. Myres) as a fertile zone exposed on all sides to invasion.

#### THE "HEARTLAND"

East of the Tigris, and beyond the rim of the Persian mountains, begins the vast region of continental and Arctic drainage which Mr. Mackinder denominates the "Heartland." In extent, it occupies about one-half of Asia and a quarter of Europe. But the Heartland has none of the sameness of the Sahara. It includes the great uplands of Iran and Mongolia; the deserts and river valleys of Turan; the inaccessible heights of Tibet; the amazing sweep of the grasslands and forests of Russia and Siberia. One feature alone permits of its classification as a unit: the rivers—and they are many and great—flow either into salt lakes, like the Caspian and Aral Seas, or into the frozen Arctic. Thus the Sahara, Arabia, and the Heartland together constitute a broad, curving belt extending across the continent from the Arctic to the Atlantic Ocean. Mr. Mackinder is at pains to emphasize the inaccessibility of these lands to ships, but the more immediate contrast is brought out by comparing the sparse, nomadic population of these regions with the dense, sedentary population of the "coast lands."

Mr. Mackinder's definition of the Heartland is a variable quantity. It starts from an acceptance, as a physiographic unit, of the distinctive area of internal or continental drainage. It ends in the strategical conception of a territory "to which, under modern conditions, sea power can be refused access." Now it is imperative that in this new study we should avoid confusion of thought. If new terms are to be invented, they should not be

applied, at the very outset, to quite different entities. It is useless to capitalize the term "Heartland," if we do not give it a precise meaning.

The narrower meaning is the more acceptable. In Mr. Mackinder's book we are in the presence of a very large conception of the *modus operandi* of human history. This conception is not new, but only of late has it been rapidly gaining ground. One might give a long list of the men who have added significantly to our knowledge of the subject during the last fifteen years. The method of approach involves the theory of a center of dispersal

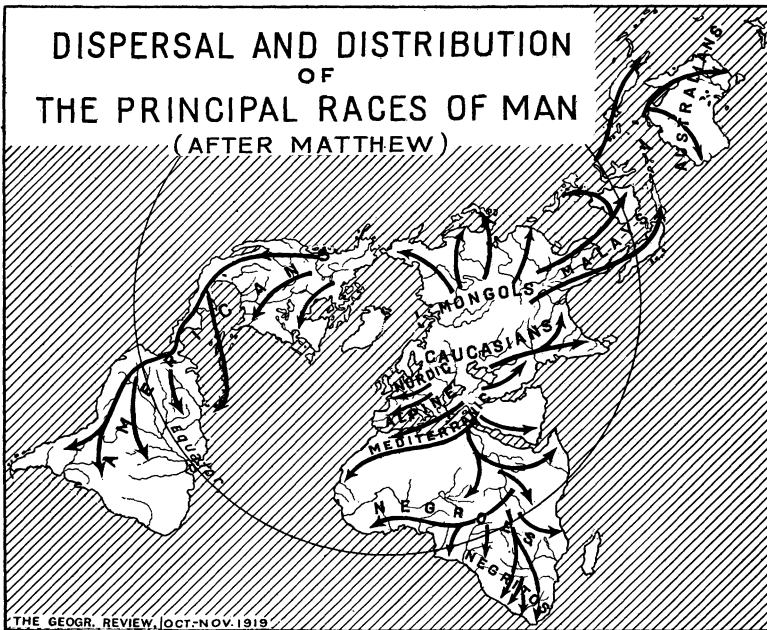


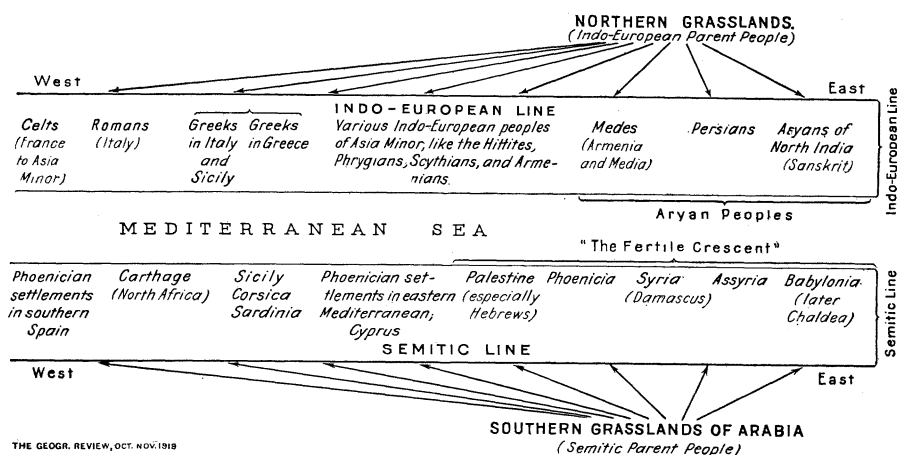
FIG. 2—Map of the world showing the dispersal and distribution of the principal races of man. Scale, 1:300,000,000. (Reproduced from Fig. 6 in W. D. Matthew: *Climate and Evolution*, *Annals New York Acad. of Sci.*, Vol. 24, 1914, pp. 171-318.)

of the human race in Asia. From this center have come the successive invasions which have overflowed the marginal lands—the Near East, India, China, Europe—in prehistoric, ancient, and medieval times (Fig. 2). If we take this center of dispersal as corresponding broadly with the area of continental drainage, we may see that the migratory movements have been from the infertile to the fertile regions, from the less to the more densely populated areas. It is far from unimportant that there has always been a disparity of man power on the part of the invaders of the coast lands.

#### MIGRATION FROM THE "HEARTLAND"

Migration from the Heartland to the marginal lands of the continent is not a theory, but a conspicuous fact. Furthermore, these movements have followed definite lines laid down by the abiding physical features of

the globe. Thus the elevation of Tibet and the sink of the Caspian are obstacles which men have always been compelled to go around. China and India are protected against invasion by the most massive upland in the world. Consequently, the only entrances to these great lowlands are difficult routes and passes skirting the barrier. Westward, the situation is wholly different. The Caspian has deflected invasions to the south or north, into the lowlands of the Near East or across the grasslands into the European peninsula, but it has been no barrier. In contrast to China



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FIG. 3.—Diagram suggesting the two lines of Semitic and Indo-European dispersion. (Reproduced from Fig. 112 in J. H. Breasted: *Ancient Times: A History of the Early World*, Boston, 1916.)

"The actual lines along which these peoples lie are of course not straight. The lines sometimes overlaid each other, as in Sicily, mentioned in both lines. Egypt, which geographically belongs in the southern line, has been omitted because it is not purely Semitic, although closely related to the Semites. Notice also that in the West the two races face each other for the most part across the Mediterranean; in the East they confront each other along the 'Fertile Crescent.' The Hittites, included above among the Indo-European peoples, became so in language, though evidently not originally so in blood."

and India, the western lands lie open and exposed to attack by every wandering tribe. "The key," Mr. Mackinder says, "to some of the greater events of ancient history is to be found in the subjection of the peoples of the agricultural strip [of the Near East] now to this and now to that neighboring race of superior mobility. From the northeast, with all the vast depth of the Heartland behind them, the horsemen came down from the Iranian upland into Mesopotamia; from the south, with all the depth of Arabia behind them, the camel men advanced northeastward against Mesopotamia, northwestward against Syria, and westward against Egypt; from the northwest, whether across the peninsula of Asia Minor or directly to the Levantine shore, came the shipmen against Syria and Egypt, having behind them all the waterways of Europe" (p. 114; cf. Fig. 3). Similarly, at a later date, western Europe was subjected to the same pounding, and from the same agents—Huns, Avars, Magyars, Turks, from the Heartland; Saracens from the south; and sea-roving Norsemen from the northwest.

## SYSTEMS OF DEFENSE AGAINST INVASION FROM THE "HEARTLAND"

Here, then, we come to the point that lends to the study of migrations its transcendent importance. In default of natural defenses, the peoples of the Near East and of Europe have been compelled to protect themselves by setting up politico-military organizations. Such organizations have come into existence, in all cases, as a result of pressure; and, by way of contrast, unexposed areas have remained backward and unprogressive to the present day. It follows that an exhaustive study of the rise and development of political government is an essential prerequisite to an understanding of the modern world. It is quite useless to teach political theories when we do not comprehend political facts. To be of value, this study must be conducted on the basis of the comparative method. We must consider the experience of the East as well as of the West, for men everywhere have responded in similar ways to similar situations—the Romans also built walls to keep off enemies. So, we may see, the new study of geography leads at once and inevitably to an investigation of the foundations of modern civilization.

It is not, however, to be supposed that Mr. Mackinder has undertaken to deal with the whole of this most intricate matter, even in its primary geographical aspect. His aim, in the present book, is twofold. First, to show that the study of geography, carried on with due regard to scientific method, can be depended upon to throw light on practical political problems; second, to add directly to our knowledge by taking up one special phase of the general subject. He has not made a comparative study of the spread of political units throughout the world, but he has presented a most informing discussion of the conflict, ceaseless since the dawn of history, between sea power and land power.

## THE STRATEGY OF EMPIRE: LAND POWER VERSUS SEA POWER

Mr. Mackinder's ambition, it is plain, has been to offer an examination of the strategy of empire, taking the whole world for a map. To be wholly successful in such an effort is probably impossible in the present generation. There is more than a trace of the persistent European bias in the author's mode of thought. That he is an Englishman, is apparent in the fact that he starts from "the seaman's point of view," though this actually narrows his outlook. That classical studies have established a major nucleus of ideas in his mind is evident when he takes the Greek seas, the Greek marginal civilization, and the Greek conquest by the semi-barbarian Macedonia as a pattern applicable throughout history.

With this approach, however, we are led to see a succession of empires, based upon sea power, each of which has been overthrown finally by a land attack. The success of land power, in each case, has come from a broadening of the field of operations and the seizure of the seaman's base of supplies. "The man power of the sea must be nourished by land fertility

somewhere, and, other things being equal, that power will control the sea which is based on the greater resources" (p. 45). The moral is obvious: this has been a war between the marginal and the continental powers. "We have been fighting lately, in the close of the war, a straight duel between land power and sea power, and sea power has been laying siege to land power. We have conquered, but had Germany conquered she would have established her sea power on a wider base than any in history, and in fact on the widest possible base" (p. 79).

#### THE CASE OF GREECE

At an early period in European history, we find a seafaring people settled round the shores of the Aegean "sea chamber." The center of

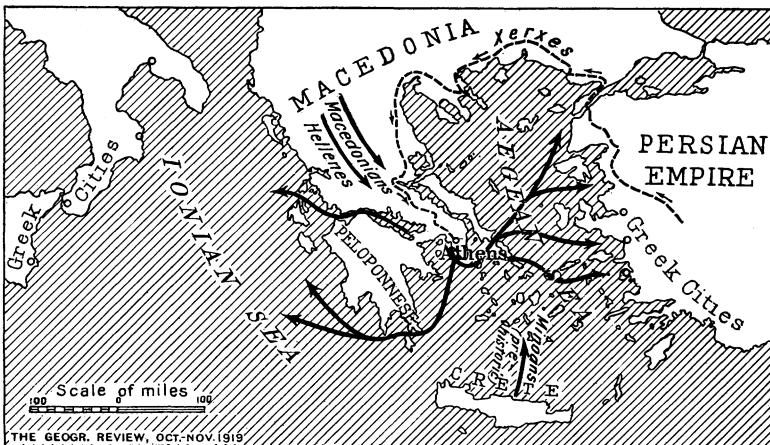


FIG. 4—The Greek seas, Aegean and Ionian, showing the Cretan insular sea base, and the Greek peninsular sea base; also the march of Xerxes to outflank the sea power of Athens. Scale, 1:13,600,000. (Reproduced from Mackinder, Fig. 3.)

civilization in this pre-Greek world was the island of Crete; and Crete (like England) was the base of a relatively wide-extending sea power. The second phase of Aegean development shows this power overthrown by attack from the mainland. Horse-riding tribes of Hellenic speech, coming down from the north into the peninsula, subjugated the earlier inhabitants and, finally, from the peninsular base conquered Crete itself. At the next stage, these Greeks have, in turn, expanded east and west, colonizing the shores both of the Aegean and the Ionian Sea. They have set up a civilization on the marginal lands of three peninsulas—each one exposed to attack, and in the end to be attacked, from the rear (cf. Fig. 4). The first blow came from the Persian land power. After seizing the Greek cities on the eastern shores of the Aegean, Persia proceeded to reduce the central land base of Greek sea power by a vast turning movement by way of the Dardanelles and Thrace. The Persian victory did not lead to an actual

conquest. This was reserved for Macedonia, the half-barbarian power seated in the root of the Greek peninsula. The Macedonian land power ended "the first cycle" of sea power, by seizing the land bases, not only of the Greeks, but of the Phoenicians and Egyptians as well. Alexander thus made of the Eastern Mediterranean a "closed sea," by which the author means that "without the protection of a navy, commerce moved securely over a water-way because all the shores were held by one and the same land power" (p. 48).

#### THE CASE OF ROME

The development of the Western Mediterranean turned upon the contest between the rival sea powers of Rome and Carthage. In the First Punic War Rome "found herself" as a sea power, based upon the fertility of Latium. After it, she enlarged her land base by annexing peninsular Italy. In the Second Punic War Hannibal outflanked the Roman sea power by conducting an army into Italy. He repeated the strategy of Xerxes, with a like result. After the war, Rome extended her dominion over the coast lands of Spain and Gaul. In the Third Punic War Rome conquered Carthage and made of the Western Mediterranean a "closed sea."

The union of the eastern and western basins followed the Roman conquest of Macedonia, "Asia," and Egypt. The sea victory of Actium enabled her to make a closed sea of the Mediterranean. Rome brought under her dominion the entire circuit of Mediterranean lands, but from beginning to end of her career she remained a marginal power. Her empire fronted the Mediterranean, not the barbarian tribes of central Europe, or the Oriental powers of the Near East. Her frontiers must be regarded as demarking the limit of penetration from the Mediterranean coast. In Mr. Mackinder's words, "As the Rhine and Danube, defended by the legions, marked the extent of Roman penetration northward from the Mediterranean, so the upper Euphrates, where it flows from north to south before bending southeastward, marked the limit, defended by other legions, of their eastward penetration from the Mediterranean" (p. 114).

#### THE MEDIEVAL SIEGE OF EUROPE

As a consequence the fate of Rome, despite her more elaborate organization, was that of Greece. The later marginal civilization, though far more extensive than the earlier, was overrun by peoples from the deep interior of the World-Promontory. The situation at the downfall of the Roman Empire appears to us, of course, as exceedingly complex. This need not disguise the fact that the break-up was due to invasion from the Heartland and Arabia, and this not once, but many times in rapid succession; and not by one, but by every possible avenue of approach. The outcome of

these invasions was what Mr. Mackinder calls "the medieval siege of Europe" (p. 61). Land power had reduced the marginal sea power to its last foothold in the western end of the European peninsula.

Here it would seem that a pardonable eagerness to reach that point in



FIG. 5.—Map showing the German *Marken* against Slavdom at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Scale, 1:16,000,000. Based on F. W. Putzger's "Historischer Schul-Atlas zur alten, mittleren, und neuen Geschichte," 41st edition, Leipzig, 1918, Pls. 15a, 17b, 18a, 18, 19b, and G. Droysen's "Allgemeiner Historischer Hand-Atlas," Leipzig, 1886, Pls. 71 and 30-31 inset.

the narrative at which Western Europe turned the tables on her invaders has led Mr. Mackinder to neglect considerations of vital importance for his own argument.

## THE DEFENSE OF WESTERN EUROPE

Let us keep steadily in mind that the Heartland and Arabia laid siege to Europe. "Only to the southeast were there practicable oasis routes leading to the outer world; but these were closed, more or less completely,



FIG. 6—Map showing the new tier of states between Germany and Russia. Scale, 1:16,000,000. Based on a map prepared by the American Geographical Society for the Committee on Public Information, showing the new boundaries in Europe as recommended to the Supreme Council of the peace conference. (See also Mackinder, Fig. 31.) None of the new states is at present completely defined except Austria; the map is only intended to show the probable configuration.

from the seventh to the nineteenth century, by the Arabs and the Turks'' (p. 62). Let us understand, too, that the seamen of Europe broke the siege

in characteristic fashion, "once the Portuguese had found the ocean way into the Indian seas." "Europe had taken its foes in rear; it had sailed round to the rear of the land, just as Xerxes, Alexander, Hannibal, and the Crusaders had marched round to the rear of the sea" (p. 66). The view is illuminating, but, as presented by Mr. Mackinder, diverts attention from the means adopted for the defense of Western Europe against invasion. The fact is that, instead of building walls, medieval Europe adopted the alternative method of setting up military organizations on exposed borders. In central Europe, therefore, there was erected a line of *Marken* extending from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea (Fig. 5). These defensive units existed in 1914, in the consolidated form of Germany and Austria.

#### THE NEW MENACE OF RUSSIA

It is, then, quite out of keeping with the historical background to seek for parallels "between the half-Greek Macedonians and the half-Latin Germans" (p. 61). The real Macedonia to our marginal civilization is the semi-barbarian power situated at the root of the European peninsula, the power known to us as Russia. The parallel was complete in 1914, whatever it may appear to be today. Mr. Mackinder strikes this keynote when he says:

The map reveals at once the essential strategic aspects of the rivalry between Russia and Britain during the nineteenth century. [Britain did what she liked on the ocean.] Russia, in command of nearly the whole of the Heartland, was knocking at the landward gates of the Indies. Britain, on the other hand, was knocking at the sea gates of China and advancing inland from the sea gates of India to meet the menace from the north-west. Russian rule in the Heartland was based on her man power in East Europe and was carried to the gates of the Indies by the mobility of the Cossack cavalry. British power along the sea frontage of the Indies was based on the man power of the distant islands in West Europe and was made available in the East by the mobility of British ships" (p. 165).

We misunderstand the situation when we call the Germans "Huns" and identify them with the invaders from the East. Germany and Austria constitute the system of defense, set up by Western Europe, against those invaders. It is true that the system was temporarily forgotten while the marginal powers to the West (like later Greeks) were struggling among themselves for colonial dominions and while Russia (the later Macedonia) was consolidating her power in Europe and reaching out to the Pacific. The era of extensive movement may be said to have closed when Russia abandoned her foothold on the American continent and turned her attention to Constantinople and India. Meanwhile, the Germans had been studying history and rediscovering the significance of their geographical position.

In the second half of the nineteenth century the Russian Czardom threatened all the marginal lands, and the Germans of Prussia and Austria awoke, as France and England had long before, to the peril of the situation.

They "determined," as Mr. Mackinder puts it, "to subdue the Slavs" (p. 137). What followed was "the *volte-face* of 1895, when was concluded the incongruous Franco-Russian alliance between democracy and despotism" (p. 161). "Russia allied herself with France against the Germans" (p. 162).

#### RELATION OF GERMANY AND AUSTRIA TO WESTERN EUROPE

It must be evident to any one not blinded by recent events that, in the opposition to the power of the Heartland, the interests of the Western powers (England, France, and Germany) were identical. In actively opposing the Russian menace to the marginal lands, Germany and Austria were carrying out, for good or ill, the historic mission which Western Europe had entrusted to them. Germany is an integral part—the defensive frontier—of Western Europe. If her politico-military organization is a menace, it is the logical product of Western ideas.

The beginning of our present troubles goes back to the break-up of Europe at the close of the Middle Ages. Freed for a time from the Eastern pressure, Europe fell apart into a number of relatively smaller states, pursuing independent territorial aims. The late William T. Stead, in a moment of illumination, advocated the establishment of "The United States of Europe." Had such an organization been effected in the eighties, we should not have had the recent exhibit of Western Europe accepting an alliance with the Heartland enemy to destroy its own system of defense against that power. The war has not been "a straight duel between land power and sea power"; it has been another case of the internecine strife of Athens and Sparta.

Mr. Mackinder is of the opinion that Germany failed by reason of uncertainty of aim—"she fought on two fronts without fully making up her mind on which front she meant to win" (p. 191). But Germany failed, in reality, because she did not identify her cause as the cause of the marginal lands against the Heartland and the remoter East. She failed strategically because her leaders (like Napoleon) neglected to learn from Alexander that any advance into the Heartland must, of necessity, be preceded by a consolidation of the marginal sea power and the establishment of a closed sea.

#### THE NEW DEFENSE OF WESTERN EUROPE

The essential correctness of this view is shown in Mr. Mackinder's own recommendations. His proposal, in short, is that, having destroyed the old defensive units, we must forthwith proceed to erect a new tier of politico-military organizations between the Baltic and the Black Sea (Fig. 6). Any such system as that proposed is foredoomed to failure so long as Germany is not made to identify herself, in spirit and in interest, with Western Europe. To leave the new states between the upper and nether millstones

is to invite destruction. And who, indeed, will guarantee that the Slavic *Marken* will be less disposed to militarist ambitions than the Teutonic? For a long time to come the "League of Nations" will be forced to maintain these new states on a war footing against the Russian peril. Who will guarantee that one or more of these states may not be disposed to march westward? May we not be whetting the edge of the Eastern sword to our own undoing?

#### THE SAFETY OF DEMOCRACY DEMANDS KNOWLEDGE

Only the greatest wisdom can possibly avert the evils that threaten our common Western civilization. "The one hope of the future is that even democracy may learn to take longer views" (p. 180)—by acquiring knowledge. The patchwork of diplomatic compromises that we call peace is no sufficient guarantee of the future. Russia, as in a mist, lies portentous in the background. The European peninsula is visibly in ruins. The United States seems disposed only to abide within the fancied security of its western island. On England devolves the burden and responsibility of the hour. She is fortunate in having men of Mr. Mackinder's vision.